

Statement from the Green Party on the Israel-Gaza conflict



9 October 2023

Responding to the unfolding horror in Israel and Gaza, Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“Our first thoughts are with the hundreds of innocent victims and their families who are faced with the devastating and escalating violence. Most of whom have an overriding desire to live in peace.

“The Green Party calls for an immediate end to the violence in Israel and Palestine. The targeting of civilians is an outrageous breach of international law and is unacceptable under all circumstances.

“We urge the international community to take immediate steps to protect civilian life and infrastructure from attack, and to launch immediate humanitarian relief efforts.

“The long absence of a meaningful political dialogue and peace process has created a vacuum into which those who offer violence as a solution to prosper. The pathway to ending these waves of violence and bringing about a long term political settlement must begin with an end to illegal occupation.

“The UN Security Council, of which the UK is a permanent member, must act to prevent the spread of the conflict to neighbouring states such as Lebanon and Iran. They have so far failed to agree any new political initiative to address the fundamental causes of these latest acts of violence. For the sake of thousands of people on both sides in this conflict, they urgently need to do so.”

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Greens call for public inquiry into HS2 mismanagement



8 October 2023

The Green Party conference called for a full public inquiry into the Conservative Government’s mismanagement of HS2, in an emergency motion to its

Brighton conference.

Members called for Parliament to investigate:

- Lack of oversight and regulation of HS2 finances
- The mismanagement of the Euston rebuild
- The removal of safeguarding of the route, effectively an attempt to sabotage future governments
- The redirecting of funds from HS2 cancellation to road building schemes, which is incompatible with the Climate Emergency

Green Peer Natalie Bennett said: “It is clear that whatever anyone’s views on HS2 as a project, the Conservatives have hopelessly mismanaged both the build and the most recent decision to cancel the project.

“To restore trust, we need to ensure that lessons are learnt from this disastrous experience and the public has a clear view of responsibilities.

“Particularly, there needs to be an examination of how money can be transferred from rail to road spending in this cavalier and non-transparent way.”

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced that Phase 2 of HS2 from Birmingham to Manchester would be cancelled.

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Green Party backs a four-day working week



8 October 2023

The Green Party has thrown its weight behind a four-day working week following a motion at their conference in Brighton.

Welcoming the decision by Party members to back the policy, Catherine Rowett, Green Party spokesperson on Work, Employment and Social Security, who proposed the motion, said:

“The UK has one of the highest working hours rates in Europe while having one of the least productive economies. The Green Party has today backed a policy of introducing a maximum 32 hour working week where workers have a right to request these reduced hours be worked over four rather than five days at no loss of pay.

"A recent trial of a four-day week with a range of organisations from diverse sectors and sizes [1] found that of the 61 companies that participated, 56 are continuing with the four-day week, with 18 confirming the policy is a permanent change.

"The trial found there was an improvement in employees' well-being, an improvement in work-life balance and an increased ability to combine paid work with care responsibilities. For the businesses involved in the trial, revenue stayed broadly the same over the trial period while the number of staff leaving decreased significantly, dropping by 57% over the trial period.

"The evidence is clear. A four-day working week is good for business, good for workers, good for the climate because people will have to commute less, and it is now confirmed as Green Party policy."

ENDS

Notes

1. <https://autonomy.work/portfolio/uk4dwpilotresults/>

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Green Party votes to ban 'High Carbon Adverts'



7 October 2023

- Adverts that promote goods, products and services that are carbon intensive are "incompatible with a liveable future."
- We need to make space for adverts for products and services which will boost local economies and help create a fairer and greener world.

At their conference in Brighton, Green delegates today backed a motion put forward by the city's constituency MP, Caroline Lucas, calling for an immediate ban on 'High Carbon Advertising'. They voted to ban adverts that promote goods, products and services that are carbon intensive, with Lucas declaring them "incompatible with a sustainable society or liveable future."

Welcoming the motion, Sian Berry, who is campaigning to become the next Green MP for Brighton Pavilion when Caroline Lucas stands down at the next election, said:

"We need to end the sprawl of adverts seeking to persuade us to buy products and services which wreck our climate, damage our environment and worsen our health. We need instead to make space for adverts for products and services which will support our local economies and help create a fairer and greener world – adverts for things such as active travel, healthier foods and sustainable fashion.

"Controls on advertising are common. Transport for London restricts advertising for a range of products including junk food, and is now close to banning gambling promotion, while France and Amsterdam are also working on high carbon adverts."

Caroline Lucas, Green Party MP for Brighton Pavilion, said:

"Carbon intensive companies are polluting the planet, and greenwashing their climate-wrecking activity through glitzy advertising campaigns which portray them as paragons of sustainability.

"I'm delighted the Green Party has backed this motion to immediately ban high-carbon advertising and help end the scourge of greenwashing on our society. It's time for adverts to reflect the best of society, rather than the worst."

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[Green Party calls on companies to put communities and environment ahead of shareholder dividends](#)



7 October 2023

*** Shareholder dividends must not be the single most important criterion for company policy making**

*** Companies need to invest profits in transitioning their operations to meet social and environmental objectives**

Companies should be required to put environmental and social priorities ahead of financial returns to shareholders. That is what members at the Green Party's conference in Brighton voted through today.

The motion, that passed with a large majority, makes clear that the right of shareholders to dividends must not be the single most important criterion for company policy making and that all those with a stake in the company's

decisions – including workers, consumers, the local community and advocates for the local environment – must have the right to make informed input into those decisions. Similarly, the campaign for the Better Business Act is pushing for a change in UK law to ensure every company in the UK aligns their interests with those of wider society and the environment [1]. They report that 77% in the UK want businesses to be legally responsible for their impact.

Ellie Chowns, Green Party parliamentary candidate in North Herefordshire, said:

“I’m delighted that the Green Party today agreed that the Companies Act 2006 should be amended so that directors of a company must prioritise public well-being and avoid negative environmental and social consequences. This means that companies will need to invest profits in transitioning their operations to meet social and environmental objectives before distributing dividends to shareholders. This is an idea popular with the public and even with many businesses themselves.”

“No industry has demonstrated more clearly the need to put environmental and social priorities ahead of financial returns than the water industry. Since privatisation, this industry has leaked out almost £70bn in dividends to shareholders while it has failed to invest in updating its infrastructure [2]. This has left us with toxic rivers and waterways and sewage contaminated coastlines. If ever an industry needed to put the interests of consumers, local communities and the environment ahead of the financial returns for shareholders, this is it.”

Notes

1. [About The Better Business Act – A Campaign for Better Business](#)
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/dec/01/water-companies-debts-since-privatisation-ofwat-refuses-impose-limits>

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